

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 DHA-02 /085 W
-----161350Z 091570 /50

R 160900Z JUN 77
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6274
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0995

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: NATIONAL PARTY LEADERS REJECT MAIN ELEMENTS OF
KOORNHOF "SWISS CANTON" SPEECH

REF: CAPE TOWN 0863

SUMMARY: REFTEL REPORTED SPEECH BY MINISTER FOR NATIONAL
EDUCATION, SPORT AND RECREATION, PIET KOORNHOF MAY 24 IN
WHICH HE SUGGESTED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM
IS "MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF" A TYPE OF SWISS CANTON
SYSTEM AND IN WHICH HE RAISED THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE FUTURE
PARTICIPATION IN SUCH SYSTEMS BY URBAN BLACKS. INITIAL
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REACTIONS FROM OPPOSITION CIRCLES AND FROM SOME NATIONAL
PARTY SUPPORTERS, INCLUDING ACADEMICS AND PARLIAMENTARY
BACKBENCHERS, WAS FAVORABLE. HOWEVER, IN PAST TWO WEEKS
SENIOR MEMBERS NP LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER VORSTER,
HAVE REPUDIATED MAJOR ELEMENTS OF KOORNHOF SPEECH. THEY HAVE
SHOWN PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY OVER IDEA OF "POWER-SHARING"
NO MATTER HOW CIRCUMSCRIBED, AND OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

AND REPRESENTATION FOR URBAN BLACKS IN ANY FRAMEWORK OTHER THAN EXISTING HOMELANDS. THEIR COMMENTS LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT ANY CHANGES PROPOSED BY CABINET COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF WESTMINSTER SYSTEM WILL BE PHRASED IN SUCH A WAY THAT NP LEADERS WILL BE ABLE TO REASSURE WHITE VOTERS ON THESE TWO KEY ISSUES. END SUMMARY

1. IN THE THREE WEEKS SINCE KOORNHOF DELIVERED HIS SPEECH, OPPOSITION LEADERS, SOME "VERLIGTE" NP MEMBERS AND EVEN ONE CABINET MINISTER, DEFMIN P. W. BOTHA, HAVE, IN VARYING DEGREES, SUPPORTED KOORNHOF PROPOSALS - OR AT LEAST THEIR OWN INTERPRETATIONS OF THOSE PROPOSALS. AT SAME TIME, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND NUMBER OF SENIOR CABINET MEMBERS, INCLUDING JUSTICE MINISTER KRUGER, DEPUTY BANTU AFFAIRS MINISTER TREURNICH, DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER LE GRANGE AND INFORMATION MINISTER CONNIE MULDER, REJECTED KOORNHOF PROPOSALS WITH VARYING DEGREES OF EXPLICITNESS.

2. IN REACTING TO KOORNHOF SPEECH, UNITER PARTY NATAL LEADER CADMAN WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT PARTS OF IT WERE "PURE GRAAF (UP LEADER DE VILLIERS GRAAF) PHRASEOLOGY" AND PRP LEADER EGLIN QUOTED AS SAYING IT COINCIDED WITH PRP POLICY WHICH LAY IN DECENTRALIZATION OF POWER TO STATES OR CANTONS WHOSE BOUNDRIES "MUST BE DRAWN TAKING GROUP AND OTHER INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT." BOTH OPPOSITION PARTIES ARGUED STRONGLY THAT IT REPRESENTED "RADICAL" DEPARTURE FROM TRADITIONAL NP POLICY AND IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE HAMMERED AWAY AT "INCONSISTENCY" BETWEEN KOORNHOF AND MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION M. C. BOTHA WHO IN DEBATE ON BOPHUTHATSWANA INDEPENDENCE BILL

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SAID THAT WHEN INDEPENDENCE ACHIEVED "ALL TSWANAS WILL CEASE TO BE SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZENS." JUNIOR NP PARLIAMENTARIANS, SUCH AS DAWIE DE VILLIERS AND SEN. DENNIS WORRALL, AND SOME ACADEMICS SUCH AS PRETORIA UNIVERSITY'S NIC RHOODIE WERE ALSO QUOTED AS APPROVING.

3. ONLY CABINET MINISTER TO INDIRECTLY SUPPORT KOORNHOF IN PUBLIC WAS DEFMIN P. W. BOTHA. IN MAY 27 SPEECH AT PRETORIA UNIVERSITY, WITHOUT REFERRING DIRECTLY TO KOORNHOF OR HIS SPEECH, BOTHA SAID THAT "A SORT OF CANTON SYSTEM WOULD ENSURE THE GREATEST MEASURE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR ALL POPULATION GROUPS OF SOUTH AFRICA." ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, BOTHA, LIKE KOORNHOF, DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS BUT SAID SUCH SYSTEM WOULD "KEEP DOORS OPEN FOR RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS AS WELL AS CONTROL OF MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN." FOREIGN MINISTER "PIK" BOTHA DECLINED COMMENT WHEN ASKED ON A TV PANEL DISCUSSION PROGRAM ABOUT KOORNHOF PROPOSALS. HE REPLIED WITH WIDE SMILE, "I KNOW WHEN NOT TO TALK." FONMIN TOLD AMBASSADOR

RECENTLY THAT KOORNHOF DID NOT RPT NOT CLEAR SPEECH IN
ADVANCE WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER BUT DID SHOW IT TO
P. W. BOTHA AND INFORMATION MINISTER CONNIE MULDER, BOTH OF
WHOM WERE REFERRED TO BY NAME IN THE SPEECH (PARA 2 REFTL).
KOORNHOF WAS OBVIOUSLY SUCCESSFUL IN GARNERING AT LEAST
TACIT SUPPORT FROM P. W. BOTHA BUT, AS NOTED PARA 5 BELOW,
WAS UNABLE TO WIN MULDER'S SUPPORT OR EVEN NEUTRALITY.

4. WHILE PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AVOIDED DETAILED PUBLIC
CRITICISM OF KOORNHOF, HE DID COMMENT DURING BBC TV INTER-
VIEW THAT MORE MUST NOT BE READ INTO SPEECH THAN KOORNHOF
ACTUALLY SAID. VORSTER NOTED THAT KOORNHOF HAD STATED CLEARLY
THAT SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT WAS "ONLY POLICY FOR SOUTH AFRICA."
WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE ROLE FOR URBAN BLACKS OUTSIDE HOME-
LANDS, VORSTER SAID HE DIDN'T SEE IT -IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE"
AND THAT IT WAS NOT RPT NOT "PRACTICAL POLITICS" AT THIS
STAGE. TREURNICHT, GENERALLY REGARDED AS LEADER OF "VERKRAMPTE"
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WING OF NATIONAL PARTY, EXPLICITLY REJECTED CANTON SYSTEM
AT A PARTY MEETING IN MOOREESBURG BECAUSE SUCH SYSTEM MEANT
"ACCEPTING A FORM OF FEDERALISM" WHICH WAS "EXCLUDED" BY NP
POLICY. TREURNICHT SAID "WE DO NOT WANT ONE PARLIAMENT THAT
WILL GOVERN EVERYONE." HE SAID SOUTH AFRICA WAS NOT "
PLURAL SOCIETY" NOT " A PLURALITY OF SOCIETIES", EACH WITH

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0995

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ITS OWN NATIONALISM. AS FOR URBAN BLACKS, TREURNICHT RE-
ITERATED NP POLICY THAT THEY WOULD DEAL THROUGH THE HOMELANDS
GOVERNMENTS AND NOT WITH THE SAG DIRECTLY. THERE WAS IRONY
IN THE LOCATION CHOSEN FOR TREURNICHT'S SPEECH SINCE IT IS
THE CONSTITUENCY OF "VERLIGTE" NATIONAL PARTY MP PIET MARAIS
WHO HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN IN HOT WATER WITH PARTY LEADERSHIP
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FOR HIS PUBLIC CRITICISMS OF ESTABLISHED NP POLICY. JUSTICE
MINISTER KRUGER ALSO REPORTED AS REJECTING CANTON SYSTEM,
TOLD PARTY MEETING IN MARITZBURG THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD
"NEVER" BE PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE BLACK PEOPLE IN A CANTON
SYSTEM.

5. IN RECENT SPEECH TO NP MEETING IN NATAL, MULDER WAS
QUOTED IN PRESS AS SAYING THAT CANTON SYSTEM WILL NOT
WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA "BECAUSE WE NEED A STRONG CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT, NOT A WEAK ONE," AND BECAUSE SWISS PEOPLE HAD
SAME STANDARD OF LIVING AND DIFFERENCES THERE BASED ON
LANGUAGE NOT ON COLOR. MULDER SAID THE SWISS CANTON SYSTEM
SHARED THE PREMIERSHIP ON A ROTATING BASIS. "IN SOUTH
AFRICA, THIS WOULD MEAN MY PRIME MINISTER FOR A YEAR, (INDIAN
LEADER) REDDY THE NEXT YEAR, (COLORED LEADER) SONNY LEON
THE NEXT AND CHIEF BUTHELEZI AFTER THAT." MULDER SAID
"HOWEVER GOOD THIS LOOKS, IT CANNOT WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA."
HE ADDED THAT "ONLY WAY TO SECURE OUR FUTURE IS TO MAINTAIN
POLITICAL POWER IN OUR OWN HANDS.

6. WHILE NOT REBUTTING HIS COLLEAGUES DIRECTLY IN PUBLIC,
KOORNHOF HAS NOT RETREATED FROM HIS STAND. IN SPEECH AT
CAPE TOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON JUNE 9, KOORNHOF ADMITTED
RUEFULLY THAT HIS "CANTON SPEECH" HAD BROUGHT HIM "A LOT OF

HEADACHES." IN A LINE WIDELY QUOTED IN ENGLISH PRESS HE REFERRED INDIRECTLY TO VARIOUS REACTIONS TO HIS SPEECH AND SAID "MINDS ARE LIKE PARACHUTES...THEY ONLY FUNCTION WHEN THEY ARE OPEN." IN A SPEECH EARLIER THIS MONTH IN CAPE TOWN, KOORNHOF REITERATED HIS BELIEF THAT A SYSTEM BASED ON MULTI-NATIONALISM AND SELF-DETERMINATION COULD BE DEvised WITH THE FULL MAINTENANCE OF EACH GROUP'S "IDENTITY" AND "WITHOUT POWER-SHARING."

7. AS NOTED REFTTEL, GIVEN VAGUENESS OF KOORNHOF'S ORIGINAL PROPOSALS IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE TO WHAT EXTENT HIS DIFFERENCES WITH HIS COLLEAGUES ARE MORE SEMANTIC THAN CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICALLY SUBSTANTIVE. HIS SPEECH HAS SERVED AS A TRIAL BALLOON AND STIMULATED THE RANK AND FILE TO START THINKING ABOUT CHANGE IN ADVANCE OF SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL PARTY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF THE WESTMINISTER SYSTEM.BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC ATTITUDES, PARTY LEADERS, SPEECHES, POLITICAL CONCESSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAPET00995
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770215-0311
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Line Count: 247
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CAPE TOWN 863
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2133672
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATIONAL PARTY LEADERS REJECT MAIN ELEMENTS OF KOORNHOF \"SWISS CANTON\" SPEECH
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SF, (VORSTER, BALTHAZAR JOHANNES), (KOORNHOF, PIET)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/520c077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009